

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20510**

June 8, 2026

The Honorable Marco Rubio  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dr. Jay Bhattacharya  
Acting Director  
Centers for Disease Control & Prevention  
400 7<sup>th</sup> Street, SW, Floor 5W  
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Mr. Secretary and Dr. Bhattacharya:

We write to express our dismay about the failure to detect and contain the deadly outbreak of Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Uganda. This outbreak was allowed to spread undetected, untreated, and unprevented in part because this Administration, under your leadership, slashed funding for global health programs, gutted public health officials and senior staff at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), shuttered the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and withdrew the United States from the World Health Organization (WHO). Now, the United States must course correct and immediately surge assistance to stem the outbreak and prevent the death toll from rising.

On May 17, 2026, the WHO declared the Ebola outbreak in the DRC and Uganda a public health emergency of international concern.<sup>1</sup> This rare strain of Ebola, known as Bundibugyo, kills between 30-40% of those infected and has no current Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved vaccine or authorized treatment. Without the United States' full partnership, public health officials failed to detect and contain this outbreak promptly, reportedly allowing the virus to circulate for "a couple of months" before it was identified.<sup>2</sup> Now more than 1,000 people are suspected to have become infected, more than 500 people have confirmed infections, and more than 90 people have died.<sup>3</sup> <sup>4</sup>The CDC predicts the "scope of the outbreak is likely larger than represented by available data", and could reach 20,000 cases and 4,000 deaths in the next three months, if the outbreak is not contained and controlled.<sup>5</sup>

This outbreak highlights serious deficiencies in our ability to identify and prevent the spread of deadly diseases like Ebola. Established by WHO and the World Bank to ensure preparedness for global health crises, the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board found that infectious disease outbreaks are becoming more common and more dangerous, and that investments in preventing outbreaks have not kept pace with the risk of a pandemic.<sup>6</sup> Instead of bolstering global health

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/news/item/17-05-2026-epidemic-of-ebola-disease-in-the-democratic-republic-of-the-congo-and-uganda-determined-a-public-health-emergency-of-international-concern>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/05/20/world/africa/ebola-congo-tedros-rubio.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/ebola/situation-summary/index.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/who-321-confirmed-ebola-cases-drc-116-more-suspected-cases-2026-06-02/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.npr.org/2026/06/05/nx-s1-5848082/ebola-virus-cdc-outbreak-democratic-republic-congo-uganda>

<sup>6</sup> <https://gpmb.org/news/news/item/18-05-2026-the-world-is-on-the-edge-of-even-greater-pandemic-damage>

programs to confront this growing threat, the United States cut global health assistance by \$9.4 billion.<sup>7</sup>

Before the foreign aid cuts in early 2025, USAID would coordinate the U.S. government response to infectious disease outbreaks by training health workers, supporting testing capacity, assisting with contact tracing, furnishing personal protective equipment (PPE), and providing resources for safe burials.<sup>8</sup> But after the Administration, under your leadership cut funding, those programs were forced to shut down or limit their operations, allowing disease to spread without detection. For example, the assistance cuts forced the International Rescue Committee to reduce its health programming and disease prevention work in three of the five areas of the Ituri Province in the DRC.<sup>9</sup> Those areas are now the epicenter of the Ebola outbreak. This response is further complicated by ongoing instability as severe humanitarian need and highly constrained access to basic services impact the more than 2 million internally displaced people and returnees living in the Ituri and North Kivu provinces.

In 2021, the CDC identified an Ebola outbreak in Guinea within 15 days, and the outbreak ended after only 23 cases.<sup>10</sup> Thanks to the United States' withdrawal from the WHO, the extent to which the CDC has been able to collaborate with the WHO on disease monitoring and prevention has reportedly changed, raising questions about current information-sharing and coordination compared to prior outbreak responses. The United States reportedly learned of this outbreak nine days after the WHO, and nearly a month after the first death.<sup>11</sup> This unnecessary delay contributed to the wider circulation of the disease, including across international borders, thereby prolonging the outbreak and leading to more deaths.

On May 19, the State Department agreed to fund up to 50 mobile clinics to treat Ebola in the DRC and Uganda, and the CDC is now working with international partners to support contact tracing and disease monitoring. This is too little too late. Reuters recently reported that the CDC is seeking additional personnel beyond its standard emergency response teams to support Ebola screening at U.S. entry points as the outbreak spreads rapidly, raising concerns about current staffing capacity.<sup>12</sup> The Administration should immediately surge additional assistance to affected regions, including PPE, testing, and laboratory supplies, medical personnel, and logistical support, while fully engaging humanitarian partners to coordinate containment and treatment efforts. This outbreak developed into a public health emergency of international concern in the wake of decisions the Administration, under your leadership, made to decimate global health security surveillance and prevention programs. The United States' withdrawal from such efforts and delayed response to this outbreak have combined to fuel preventable human suffering. As Benjamin Franklin once said, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

Therefore, we request that you provide answers to the following questions no later than June 29, 2026:

1. Given the reported limits on formal engagement between the United States and WHO following withdrawal, what coordination mechanisms, if any, currently exist between the CDC, the State Department, and WHO to support this Ebola outbreak response?

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.thinkglobalhealth.org/article/one-year-post-usaid-global-health-funding-stuck-in-limbo>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/05/20/health/ebola-congo-united-states-trump.html>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.rescue.org/press-release/funding-cuts-led-delayed-detection-ebola-outbreak-drc>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/global-health/impact/historic-ebola-response.html>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/05/20/health/ebola-congo-united-states-trump.html>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/us-cdc-seeks-staff-ebola-screening-outbreak-response-expands-2026-05-26/>

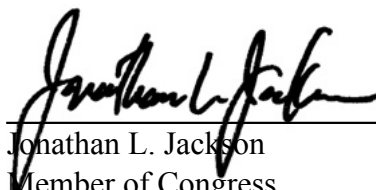
2. How are the CDC and State Department working with international partners and local governments to help with contact tracing, border screening, and disease monitoring to stop the spread of Ebola?
3. What funding and supplies is the State Department providing to support our international partners and local governments in responding to this Ebola outbreak?
4. What is the current strategy for identifying, monitoring, and responding to outbreaks of Ebola at the CDC and the State Department, and has that strategy changed since January 2025?
5. What U.S. global health programs that funded disease surveillance, detection, and medical response in the DRC and Uganda were terminated or reduced their funding since January 2025?
6. What changes, if any, do the CDC and the State Department plan on making to the funding and support for global health security efforts to prevent another outbreak like this one from going undetected?
7. How many staff at the CDC and State Department have been working on this Ebola outbreak response? How many of these staff have experience handling international disease outbreaks? And how does this staffing level compare to the number of staff that handled the 2014-2015 West Africa Ebola response?
8. If the outbreak continues to significantly spread, will the Administration commit to providing the necessary funding and requesting emergency appropriations from Congress, as prior administrations have done?
9. What protocols are in place to ensure that U.S. citizens and public health personnel exposed to or infected with Ebola while abroad receive timely medical care and access to high-quality treatment consistent with U.S. domestic standards? Does the Administration plan to send exposed or infected Americans to Kenya for quarantine and treatment rather than the U.S., and what steps are being taken to rapidly expand treatment capacity to keep pace with the fast-moving outbreak?

Infectious diseases do not stop at borders. This Ebola outbreak has already infected one American doctor and risks bringing this deadly disease to our nation. We urge you to reverse the cuts to our global health programs, rejoin the WHO, and ensure that we have the expert staff at the CDC and the State Department needed to prevent and manage any future outbreaks of deadly diseases before they endanger Americans.

Sincerely,



Gabe Amo  
Member of Congress



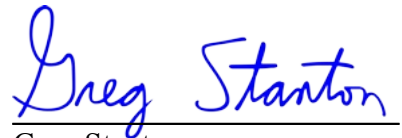
Jonathan L. Jackson  
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly  
Member of Congress



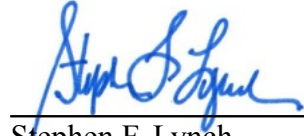
Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



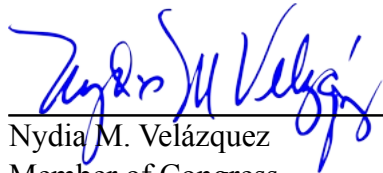
Greg Stanton  
Member of Congress



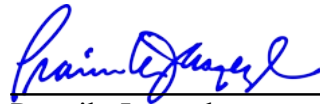
Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



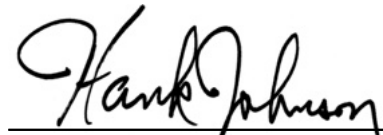
Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress



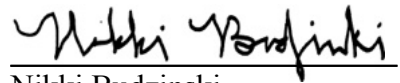
Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress



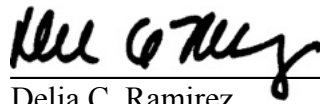
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress



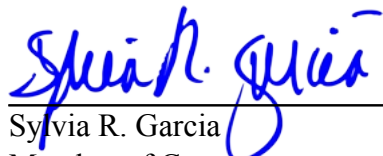
Nikki Budzinski  
Member of Congress



SETH MOULTON  
Member of Congress



Delia C. Ramirez  
Member of Congress



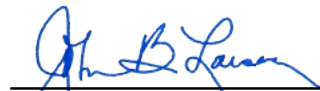
Sylvia R. Garcia  
Member of Congress



Brad Sherman  
Member of Congress



Dina Titus  
Member of Congress



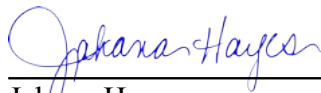
John B. Larson  
Member of Congress



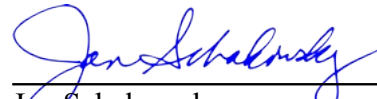
Lizzie Fletcher  
Member of Congress



Terri A. Sewell  
Member of Congress



Jahana Hayes  
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



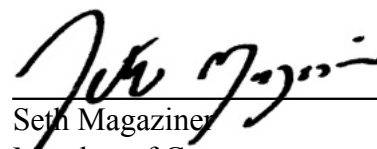
Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress



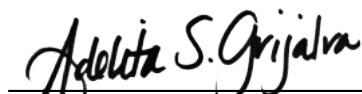
Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress



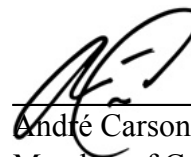
Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress



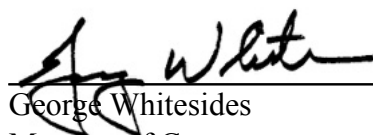
Seth Magaziner  
Member of Congress



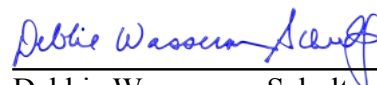
Adenita S. Grijalva  
Member of Congress



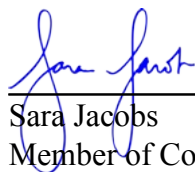
André Carson  
Member of Congress



George Whitesides  
Member of Congress




Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Member of Congress



Sara Jacobs  
Member of Congress



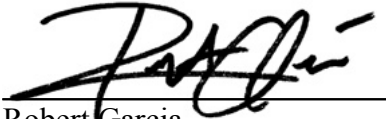
Paul D. Tonko  
Member of Congress



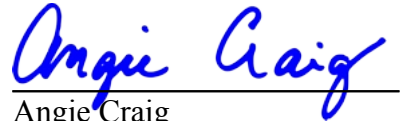
Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



Sydney Kamlager-Dove  
Member of Congress



Robert Garcia  
Member of Congress



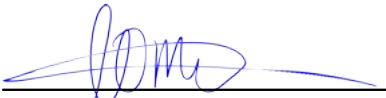
Angie Craig  
Member of Congress



Jasmine Crockett  
Member of Congress



Marc A. Veasey  
Member of Congress



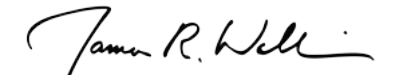
Ilhan Omar  
Member of Congress



Bradley Scott Schneider  
Member of Congress



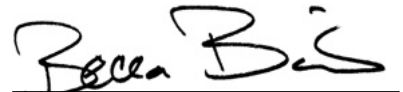
Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress



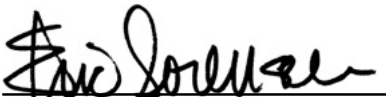
James R. Walkinshaw  
Member of Congress



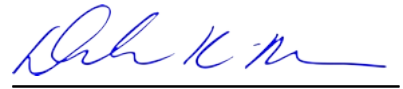
Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress



Becca Balint  
Member of Congress




Eric Sorensen  
Member of Congress



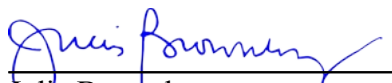
Deborah K. Ross  
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



Yassamin Ansari  
Member of Congress



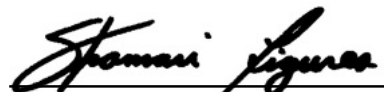
Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress



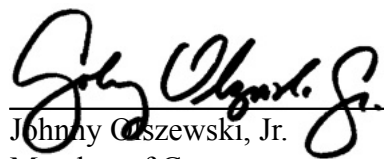
Maxine Dexter, M.D.  
Member of Congress



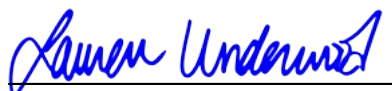
Shomari Figures  
Member of Congress



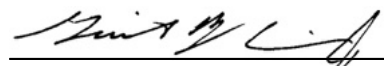
Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress



Johnny Ciszewski, Jr.  
Member of Congress



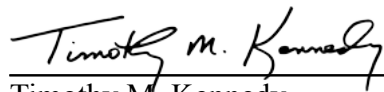
Lauren Underwood  
Member of Congress



Gilbert Ray Cisneros, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Madeleine Dean  
Member of Congress



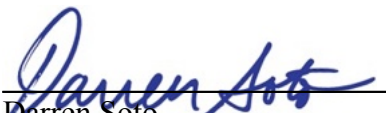
Timothy M. Kennedy  
Member of Congress



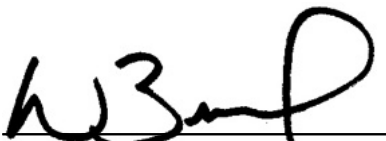
Sean Casten  
Member of Congress




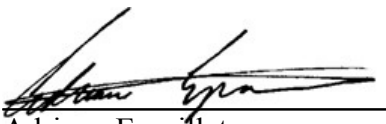
Shri Thanedar  
Member of Congress

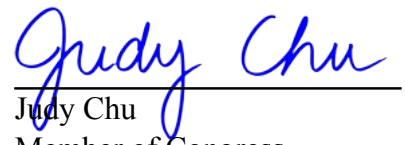
  
Darren Soto  
Member of Congress

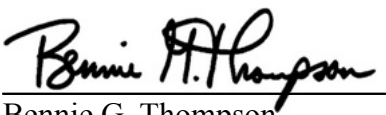
  
George Latimer  
Member of Congress

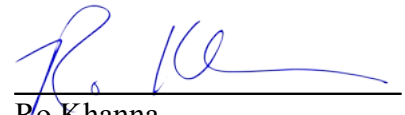
  
Wesley Bell  
Member of Congress

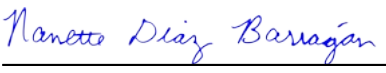
  
Jesús G. "Chuy" García  
Member of Congress

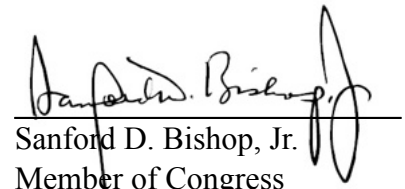
  
Adriano Espaillat  
Member of Congress

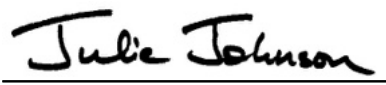
  
Judy Chu  
Member of Congress

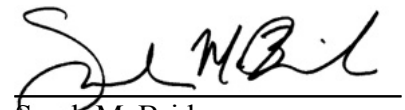
  
Bennie G. Thompson  
Member of Congress


  
Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress

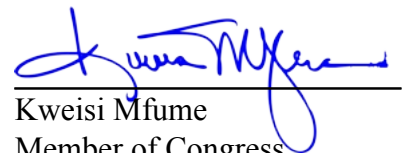
  
Nanette Diaz Barragán  
Member of Congress

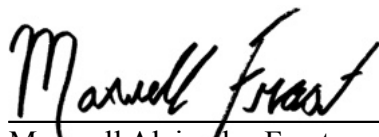
  
Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Member of Congress

  
Julie Johnson  
Member of Congress

  
Sarah McBride  
Member of Congress

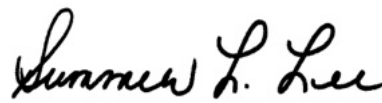
  
Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress

  
Kweisi Mfume  
Member of Congress



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Maxwell Alejandro Frost  
Member of Congress



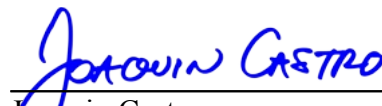
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Summer L. Lee  
Member of Congress



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John Garamendi  
Member of Congress



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Joaquin Castro  
Member of Congress